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ABSTRACT

The university system in Nigeria has experienced phenomenal growth during the last 20 years, but the increasingly larger enrollment of students has not been supported with similar development of higher education professionals. There is a growing awareness of the need for ensuring and enhancing the high quality of teaching staff at the higher education level. Some Nigerian universities have established small programs and workshops for faculty development and orientation. A survey of 35 lecturers and professors at Obafemi Awolowo University revealed that many did not have any professional training and some felt that training was not necessary to be effective. It is suggested that faculty at the higher education level must know not only about the subject they are teaching but also about teaching approaches. (CB)

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Practices in Higher Education Personnel
Development in Nigeria: Professional
Imperatives for the Future.

by

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Practices in Higher Education Personnel
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Introduction

University system in Nigeria, as in other parts of the world, is concerned with the dual function of searching and seeking the truth; and the dissemination of such truth through a variety of teaching techniques with a view to enriching the social economic and cultural life of the people. Without any doubt, the teacher plays a major role in influencing the dissemination of knowledge at all levels of education. Therefore, there is the need to ensure appropriate and adequate development of these teachers for their tasks.

Unfortunately, many universities around the world place a little premium on teaching as an important function of the university. The emphasis was on research and this took precedence over teaching. Even today most universities, especially in Nigeria, base staff promotions principally on research and practically ignore teaching as an essential criterion for faculty promotion. The universities in Africa followed this Euro-American pattern and sometimes perfect the act better the latter in applying the rigorous rules. A good university teacher, it is said, is a good researcher but an outstanding researcher may not necessarily be a good university teacher.

In this paper, personnel development is limited to academic personnel development. After a brief presentation of the educational system, the personnel development is examined through a survey of the background with which a sample of university lecturers and professors in Nigeria came into university teaching. Different approaches for the preparation of the university teachers, including on the job training are highlighted.

The Scenario

Nigeria is one of the most complex countries in the world. Perhaps, only India offers a greater variety of peoples. Nigeria has ten major and hundreds of lesser languages. She still uses English as her official language and as the language of higher education, commerce and national politics (although the Constitution provides for the use of Hausa, Yoruba and Ibo in the National Assembly).

Nigeria was a British creation, dating from 1861 when the Royal Navy occupied Lagos in the campaign against the slave trade. Piece-meal, the British expanded into the interior and created a country of over 350,000 square miles, as big as France and Italy together with the furthest point on the northern frontier about 1,600 kilometres from Lagos, while the eastern frontier is about 960 kilometres away from Lagos.

Nigeria is a secular state whose constitution forbids the adoption of any religion as a state religion. But Nigerians are a religious people. According to the 1963 census, there were twenty-six million muslims, twenty million christians, and ten million people of other religious nearly all of which are indigenous to Nigeria. The great majority of people in the most northerly states are muslims.

Some of the ethnic or linguistic groups often numbering many millions are numerous enough to be called nations. Some of the traditional chiefs are still an expression of group identity, the social and political consequences of which are often ignored and sometimes exaggerated. But these issues of group identity represented by ethnic groups do affect the country's life at many points.

Nigeria is by far the most populous country in Africa, but she is only tenth in area. The average density of population, some 60 per square kilometer, is high by African standards, although it is low compared with the United Kingdom's 230. Nigeria still has abundant undeveloped land. While Anambra and Imo States, in the south east, are probably the most densely populated parts of Africa with population pressure on the land, there are other areas in the middle of the country with sparse population creating a different kind of problems for development. As the proportion of children of school age grows, and as

government policy encourages universal (free) primary education, the outcome is an increasing burden on those of the working age group thereby starving agriculture of the labour of young people without the corresponding or alternative mechanised farming approach.

Standards of living vary widely, both between individuals and social classes, and between areas, regions and communities. Nigeria has a mixed economy and Nigerians in all parts of the country, and of both sexes, readily and successfully engage in trade often as a side-line to a salaried job. The growing class of rich, sometimes very rich, businessmen and women are drawn from all parts of the country, becoming rich, often, from poor family backgrounds. Oil revenues accounting for some 80 percent of total government revenues have enabled the Federal Government to affect the daily lives of people everywhere in Nigeria during the last two decades.

The foregoing graphic description of Nigeria certainly has implications for the development of education education planning, personnel development, and plans for future of education in Nigeria. It is with this background for educational setting that the Nigerian university teacher is developed.

University Enrollment and Personnel Development

In Nigeria, the University system has experienced phenomenal growth in the last twenty years, like all arms of the Education Sector. Student enrollment rose from a mere 1,395 in 1960/61 to 112,000 by the end of 1985/86 session, with spurts in 1962, 1975, and 1980-83. The last spurt came as a result of massive, and often unplanned expansion in Education of the Second Republic, with the unprecedented increase in the number of universities, and, infact all educational institutions. In addition to the six institutions. In addition to the six universities in existence in 1975, seven Federal universities of Technology and about eight state universities were established. The private sector chipped in with as many as twenty-four universities, except that this last category, that is private universities, were banned before they make mockery of higher education, as the present Minister of Education.

The large enrollment of students in the last decade has not been backed up by adequate national resources, and the country is therefore facing the predictable consequences of expansion at the expense of quality. There is, therefore, the need to take all the necessary steps to protect the quality of our education. The attempts to maintain quality in education cannot be done without due consideration of the university teachers and their development.

In a review of literature on staff development in African Universities, Akanbi (1981) indentified about seven approaches to

university faculty development in the context of African universities. Among these were:

- (i) staff recruitment - number of staff to be trained, what discipline and to what levels of academic distinctions;
- (ii) recruitment of young first-degree holders as graduate assistants with prospect for further academic advancement to doctoral level;
- (iii) localization of staff-facilitating the mental and ideological orientation of the outlook of both teachers and learners, thus making it easier to gear universities to Nigerian realities;
- (iv) provision of research facilities and grants for staff in pursuance of projects which are locally related;

The underlying assumption in the above is that a typical university teacher is the holder of an earned doctorate degree and that the programme that led to the Ph.D. is a most appropriate pattern or approach to train personnel for university teaching. Any university graduate can attest to the fact that he had at various times come across poor teachers or lecturers or professors at the university. Holders of advanced degrees may with few exceptions be good research workers, but it is not axiomatic that they are naturally good teachers either at the secondary or the

higher education level.

There is a growing awareness of the need for some orientation course or an in-service programme for new lecturers. In the United States of America, for instance, a number of universities have "an apprentice college teachers' course" or internship programme for prospective university teachers. While in the United Kingdom, the Robbin's Report indicated that 58 percent of the university teachers surveyed felt that new university teachers should be given some form of organised instruction or guidance on how to teach. George Kneller in his Higher Learning in Britain (1965) described the issue more succinctly:

The need for some sort of training in teaching methods and educational psychology is of course, not limited to elementary and secondary school practice, but applies equally to university staff members.

While the concerns raised above were primarily in terms of practices in some Western countries, it is a fact that Nigeria and Africa for that matter are no exceptions, as most of the current university practices in Africa were inherited from their colonial past. The issue of methodology and orientation for teachers in African universities is even more acute than those of the Western universities.

Personnel Development Programmes to
Improve University Teaching:

Some attempts have been made in Africa, indeed in Nigeria, to improve university teaching through personnel development programmes. Standa (1984) described the Nairobi Workshop that drew participants from various African, European and Asian Universities. The workshop resulted into a number of university activities related to teaching and learning in various regions of Africa. The rationale for choosing the theme of improving university teaching for the workshop arose from a general consensus that the role of the university can be adequately played when academicians within these institution have relevant skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable them perform their specific roles. To meet such ends, the universities must be staffed and sufficiently equipped to carry out the roles of teaching, research, consultancy and other critical responsibilities as the universities might be called upon to fulfil. The theme of the Nairobi Workshop was also intended to address itself to the problems of academicians who are deep in the know what but are shallow in the know how. Hence the necessity for personnel training in pedagogy in universities as it is the case with other lower levels of the education system. The lack of pedagogical instruction for academic personnel in various roles of teaching, research and service is greatly felt in African universities.

The Nairobi Workshop was just one of many regional workshops that have arisen out the Plan of Action of Workshop 82, which preceeded Nairobi. However, the success and hope for improved teaching in universities of Africa depend on how the people who attended these regional workshops play their roles as agent of change in their home universities. This is a matter of great concern to the present writer. What has happened after the Workshops of the early 1980's and those before them? Have university teachers improved in their background training? Do they now have improved attitude and strategies to university teaching?

Standa (1984) reported a positive experience from Tanzania, where a Teaching and Learning Programme of the University of Dar-es-salaam has succeeded in improving the quality of academic staff through designing instruments, which are now used for evaluating lecturers and professors through student feedback. The programme also helps the institution to develop objective criteria for promotion of staff, among other achievements.

Fafunwa (1975) described an early attempt in Nigeria to develop personnel for better teaching through an induction course at the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University). The idea of the course was initially discussed, debated and agreed upon at the department and faculty of education levels. Other faculties of the university were later involved in its planning

in a series of meetings. The course was launched during September/October, 1974. In addition, University of Ife actually hosted a Training In University Teaching Methods Workshop, similar to the Nairobi Workshop, in 1977. It was held under auspices of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities, the Inter University Council, London, the Universities of Ife and Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria.

Unfortunately, much of what is left of these ventures of the 1970's is history. One of my postgraduate students retorted very recently:

"... It the Faculties of Education in our universities are themselves convinced about the significance of improved teaching in the universities, they should mount programmes on instructional strategies for university teachers and sell the importance of teaching to the university administration."

I see this statement as indictment on the Education faculties themselves to first improve their own teaching, and be a good model for other faculties.

Personnel Development for Teaching of Selected University Teachers

In order to appraise and update the pedagogical background of university teachers, I did a small survey at my own university, Obafemi Awolowo University and this is reported herein.

The purposes of the survey were:

1. To determine pedagogical background of university lecturers, using university of Ife as a case study.
2. To assess the respondents opinions on the need for pedagogical training of academic personnel in Universities.

To carry out this study on "Pedagogical Background of University Teachers", the questionnaire technique of gathering data was used. Thirty-five out of forty lecturers/professors from different Departments in the Faculties of Science, Technology, Arts and Social Sciences who were involved in the study returned their well-completed questionnaires.

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire constructed by the researcher. The instrument consists of two parts: There is a general part requesting information about age, sex, faculty, department, post-graduate qualification and field of specialisation. The second part consists of NINE multiple choice questions in response to which the respondent was to choose the most appropriate alternative to the question asked. There was one question to which respondents are to give reasons why they chose the alternatives chosen by them. There are thirty-five respondents out of forty who duly completed. Of the 35 respondents 33 were males and two were females. Percentages and Chi-square techniques were used for the analysis of the data.

About 68.6% (24) of the respondents were below 40 years of age, while the others, 31.4% were above 40. They were mostly from the Faculty of Science, 21 or 60% of the group. Others, 6(17.1%) from Arts, 2(5.7%) from Technology, while 6(17.1%) also came from Social Science Faculty. In terms of qualification, 23 or 65.7% of the group had Ph.Ds, while 12(34.3%) each had a Master's Degree.

Table 1
Responses to Questions on Pedagogical Training
For University Teachers

	ALTERNATIVES				
	A	B	C	D	E
Professional Background	None 30(85.7%)	Grade II 4(11.4%)	N.C.E. 1(2.9%)	-	-
Level of Pre-University teaching	Post-Primary 32(91.4%)	Post-Secondary 3(8.6%)	-	-	-
Total No. of years of teaching experience	5 years 9(25.7%)	5-10 yrs. 12(34.3%)	10-20yrs 9(25.7%)	20years 5(14.3%)	-
Teaching experience in the University	5years 13(37.1%)	5-10 yrs. 14(40%)	10-20yrs 7(20%)	20years 1(2.8%)	-
Rewarding TEACHING, RESEARCH & SERVICE, in that order	60:30:10 13(37.1%)	30:60:10 12(34.3%)	40:40:20 10(28.6%)	10:40:20: 0(0%)	10:30:60 0(0%)
Describing Respondent's University Teaching experience	academically rewarding 17(48.6%)	challenging but interesting 18(51.4%)	difficult and boring 0(0%)	Frustrating and waster of time 0(0%)	-

Table 1 give a summary of the responses the multiple choice questions and partially summarises the results. On the major item soliciting for their opinion about Professional training for University Teachers, 27 (77.1%) agreed positively while 8(22.9%) maintained that it is not desirable and that it is useless. A breakdown of the item showed that 16(45.7%) said it would contribute to their teaching effectiveness, *8 (22.9%) said it would enable them handle students' problem effectively. *3 (8.6%) said it would enhance their professional outlook. *7 (20%) said professional training in teaching has no relevance for university teachers. *1 (2.9%) said it inhibits academic growth.

On the question of assessment of university teachers by their students, the following results were obtained.

- *Would help teachers assess their teaching: 20 (57.2%)
- *Would enable the teachers to know students' feeling but not affect their teaching: 4 (11.4%)
- *Would enable university teachers to monitor their teaching capabilities: 6 (17.1%)
- *Will NOT contribute to the teacher's effectiveness: 5 (14.3%).

To find out whether the differences in responses are significant on whether Professional training is necessary/essential for university

teachers, a χ^2 -statistical technique was used (since the responses are qualified in frequency form). Items four and six on the questionnaire were used for the table below $\chi^2_c = 0.8434$, $\chi^2_t = 3.84$ $df = 1$.

Table II
Responses by Teaching Experience

		Respondents with <u>more</u> than 10 years University teaching experience	Respondents with <u>Less</u> than 10 years University teaching experience
Professional training for University teacher	Useful and essential	12	10
	Not Useful	5	8

Since χ^2 calculated = 0.8434 χ^2 table = 3.84 at 0.05 level of significance, $df = 1$, though as many as 22 out of 35 respondents felt that professional training is useful and essential for university teachers, and only 13 respondents felt otherwise, the difference in opinion is not statistically significant.

Respondents were asked to comment freely on the issue of professional training for university teachers. In response to the item requesting respondents to give their reasons for approving or disapproving professional training for University teachers, their responses fell into two categories: favourable and unfavourable.

Some favourable comments are:

1. Most university lecturers are ignorant on how to deal with students' problems, of how to organise contents and present it effectively to promote students' learning.
2. Knowing one's stuff academically is one thing, and to be able to pass on the knowledge to another person, is an entirely different thing. Hence professional training in teaching helps in solving this problem as well as gives professional exposure and acquisition necessary skills.
3. Professional language is acquired as well as expertise and having foresight in managing the class, handling of one's subjects effectively, ensuring better results, are some of the benefits for many lecturers (who are brilliant but deficient instructional techniques). When exposed to professional training in university teaching. General complaint of students is that lecturers do not care if students grasp the materials taught by them or not; hence method of teaching is important for any effective communicative teaching.

Some unfavourable comments are:

1. Teaching in the university could be informal unlike in Primary and Secondary Schools.
2. A good teacher is not necessarily a good academician, hence lecturing in the university is not teaching by

university academicians.

3. Elementary teaching techniques have nothing to do with one's performance as a university lecturer.
4. University teaching is nothing different from lecturing, hence university teaching and professionalism in teaching has no relationship.
5. University lecturing does not require professional training - experience is the best teacher.
6. Professional training of university teacher is of no use. The time for training had better been spent on further academic progress.

It is observed that majority of the opinions expressed by respondents were unfavourable in that they do not consider pedagogical training or background, important in discharging their duties. However, from psychological point of view, it is important that there is need for a flow of communication in any teaching/learning situation. From experience, one could say that majority of Nigerian students do not gain much in terms of the aims of university education as spelt out in our Education Policy. This Policy agrees with those university teaching aims, such as those cited by Steyn in his University Didactics. Among these are:

- (i) Instruction in skills suitable to plan a part in the general division of labour,

(ii) The production of cultivated men and women and not mere specialists, and

(iii) The advancement of learning.

It is our view that the first essential of good teaching is that the teacher must know the subject, but since teaching is inseparable from learning, every good teacher will continue to learn about his subject matter on a continuous basis. H

From the favourable comments, one can see clearly that after knowing his subject matter, (or academically sound) the task of the teacher now becomes the organisation of his instructional activities. Hence the need for pedagogic background for university teachers. A good teacher is a scholar as well as a professional. Being a scholar does not imply being a good teacher but being a good teacher implies one is a good scholar. Teaching and Research in the university should be rated equally - an idea supported by 28.6% of the respondents.

Hight (1965) gave examples of scholars who failed to teach effectively. According to him, men who made scientific discoveries in the 19th and early 20th centuries were brilliant thinkers who possess powerful and capacious minds but often they were not good teachers. Sometimes they were afraid of their pupils. Examples of such scholars were Gauss, the Mathematician who hated teaching and told each individual student who enrolled that his course

would in all probability not be given at all.

Mommsen - a historian would prepare his lectures carefully and accurately but usually prepare what interested him rather than what his students could assimilate with the result that his lecture-room was always half-empty long before the term ended.

The above examples have shown that one can be a scholar and not be a good teacher.

Professional Imperatives for the Future

The art of Teaching is a complex one that needs training in the realm of Instructional Technology before one can teach effectively. A teacher is devoted to the subject-matter in relation to its value in life and its uses/usefulness to the children. He is concerned with how the knowledge affects the learner and what the learner can do with the subject-matter and not just primarily concerned with Mastery of the subject for its own sake. Hence to be a teacher, one must first of all be a scholar because a teacher cannot understand the problems of the child as to the learning of the subject matter if he himself does not know it.

A scholar without teaching qualification may probably be devoted to his special subject matter in relation to its academic values. It is probable that he constantly pushes forward into the unexplored territory and hence cannot understand the elementary difficulties of their students. He could not also realise that the

distant areas of the subject which he considers obvious and exciting to himself are inconceivable to beginners.

One can now see clearly from the arguments above that after knowing his subject matter, the teacher's task becomes the organisation of his instructional activities in a way to facilitate the understanding of his students. Hence the teacher's work in the classroom, whether in the university or elsewhere, demands the use of many techniques, devices and procedures for different situations that may arise. Teaching is an art, hence it would be wrong for anybody to think that Pedagogical trainings for university teachers are unnecessary or useless since education courses and training are not "How to prepare lesson plans or teaching units of courses taken from a text book alone." It goes deeper than envisaged. This is because the teacher works with human beings and teaching is a psychological relationship - a helping relationship. Some personal characteristics of the teacher are emphatic understanding of subject matter, respect, warmth and genuineness and so on. Some of which are in the realm of humanistic behaviour. Hence it is necessary that university teachers are given professional training on the job as a condition for confirmation of their appointment. Among our imperatives of the future for university personnel development, therefore, must be:

- (i) Constant upkeep and regular upgrading of facilities, including the staffing levels.

- (ii) The organisation of workshops, seminar, conferences on production and utilization of teaching aids.
- (iii) University authorities, especially in African setting, should encourage the establishment of Teaching Improvement Centres to help university teachers who do not have pedagogical background training, and serve as refresher course centre for others who might have had the original training.
- (iv) Development of scientific and effective system of evaluation to access teaching effectiveness, the quantity and quality of research undertaken and completed, commitment of staff to Nigerian values and services rendered to the community.
- (v) The improvement of the initial training of the university personnel in such a way that additional qualities must be developed before the person who has learned thoroughly becomes the person who can teach competently.

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